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It All Starts In Your Yard

-  Avoid having to sweep the sidewalk or street by facing your mower away from the street.
-  Any grass clippings or leaves left on the street or sidewalk must be swept or blown back into the yard.
-  Mulch-mow leaves and grass when they are dry. Dry leaves are much easier to mulch and cause less wear and tear on the mower.
-  Weekly mulch mowing of leaves is best. When leaves begin to fall more quickly, making multiple passes with the mower will sufficiently mulch the leaves into the turfgrass.
-  Both grass clippings and leaves can easily clog stormdrains and cause localized flooding and property damage. The house you flood may be your own! Mulching in-place is the easiest and best solution.

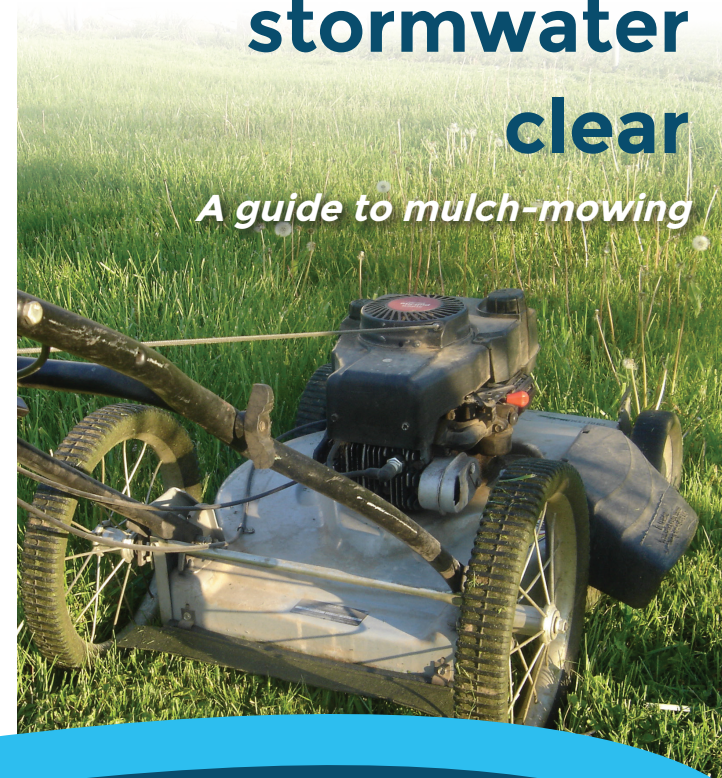
Stormwater Division
Department of Public Works
1802 Courtland Rd. NE
Roanoke, VA 24012



KEEP IT ON THE LAWN

Tips for keeping stormwater clear

A guide to mulch-mowing



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540-853-5900



What Is Mulch Mowing?



Mulch-mowers are essentially “food processors” for the lawn. They chop grass clippings and leaves many times before depositing the bits right back into the turfgrass. Mulch-mowing not only helps to keep turfgrass lush, green, and healthy, but research has shown that mulch mowing reduces weeds like dandelions and crabgrass over time because this organic material covers any voids in the turf where weeds could germinate. It also saves you time, money and labor by not having to rake, bag and haul leaves to the curb.

Weekly mulch-mowing of leaves is normally as quick & easy as regular grass mowing, with heavier leaf accumulations taking only a second or third mowing pass to make the leaves seemingly disappear as they filter into the turfgrass canopy and finally down to soil level. While dedicated mulching mowers may work best, virtually any rotary mower will do the job. Just set the mower to 3” cutting height or greater and mow as usual every week. The mulched material decomposes and incorporates new organic matter into the topsoil, reducing water and fertilizer needs over time.

Benefits of Mulch Mowing

It's good for your yard:

- Mulching leaves and grass enhances the health and growth of the turf by reducing evaporation of moisture from the lawn and keeping soil temperature cool.
- Mulch-mowing increases soil health by providing up to 25% of fertilizer needs for an average lawn. Healthy soils act like a sponge, storing carbon and absorbing stormwater runoff.

It's good for the environment:

- Mulch-mowing keeps leaves and grass clippings from polluting our waterways. Excess nutrients from these sources are harmful to streams by leading to excessive algae growth which robs water of oxygen leading to illness or death of aquatic life.
- Nutrient pollution impacts the environment, human health, and the economy.

It's good for you:

- Saves you time, effort, and money!
- Mulching yard material is easier and faster than raking, bagging and blowing.

Be part of the solution, not the pollution!

The City Code of Roanoke prohibits grass clippings and leaves from being directed into the streets and sidewalks and left there to be washed into the drainage system.

Grass clippings and leaves that are left to enter the stormdrain system are considered to be an illicit discharge. Illicit discharge is any material which is not composed entirely of stormwater that is discharged into the storm drain system. Examples of illicit discharges include paint poured into drains, leaking fluids from vehicles, yard waste entering drains, disposable plastic products, and even pet waste left on yards and other urban surfaces. Since stormwater runoff is not cleaned after entering the stormdrain system, these illicit discharges pollute our waterways, harming the health of our streams.

Please note that curbs, gutters, ditches and other stormwater conveyances are all considered portions of the City's stormwater drainage system.



Report Illicit Discharges!

Please contact the City of Roanoke's Stormwater Utility at stormwater@roanokeva.gov or by calling 540-853-5900.